

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 /069 W

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R 211300Z JAN 77

FM AMCONSUL HALIFAX

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1525

INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

UNCLAS HALIFAX 0026

E O 11652: N/A

TAGS: MPOL CA

SUBJECT: VISIT OF CANADIAN DEFENCE MINISTER TO
MARITIME COMMAND

1. CANADIAN MINISTER OF DEFENCE BARNEY DANSON VISITED SHIPS AND SHORE ESTABLISHMENTS OF MARITIME COMMAND DURING PERIOD JAN 17-19, 1977. TOUR BEGAN WITH VISIT TO VICE-ADMIRAL DOUGLAS BOYLE AT MARCOM HQS IN HALIFAX, FOLLOWED BY PRESS CONFERENCE. DANSON TOLD PRESS HE CONCERNED ABOUT NEED TO UPGRADE FACILITIES AND JOB CONDITIONS RELATED TO SEA TIME FOR PERSONNEL. WITH REGARD TO SEA TRADES PERSONNEL, HE NOTED RECRUITMENT LAGGING BECAUSE OF EXTENDED TIME THEY SERVE AT SEA AWAY FROM FAMILIES. NOTING AGE OF CANADIAN WARSHIPS, DANSON STATED SHIP REPLACEMENT PROGRAM WILL RECEIVE HIGH PRIORITY OVER NEXT YEAR. HE SAID NEW SHIPS MUST BE READY BY 1985 OR OLD ONES MUST BE UPGRADED TO EXTEND THEIR USEFUL LIVES. NO DECISION HAS BEEN MADE, HE SAID, CONCERNING REPLACEMENT OR EXPANSION OF SUBMARINE FLEET.

2. DURING SUBSEQUENT PRESS CONFERENCE JAN 19, DANSON STATED HE HAD RECEIVED POSITIVE RESPONSE FROM PERSONNEL AT CFB GREENWOOD WHEN HE TALKED WITH THEM
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ON SUBJECT OF FRENCH LANGUAGE UNITS (FLU), DESPITE RUMORS OF DISSENSION ON BASE STEMMING FROM FLU PROGRAM. IALLING CFB GREENWOOD THE MOST IMPORTANT IN CANADA, A FLAGSHIP AS FAR AS IMPLEMENTATION OF FLU'S IN THE CANADIAN FORCES IS CONCERNED, DANSON SAID PROGRAM MUST CONTINUE, ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF LAST QUEBEC ELECTION, BUT THAT THE FLU MUST BE INTEGRAL PART OF

IONCEPT OF CANADIAN FORCES AND NOT SEPARATE ENTITIES.
DISSENSION OVEC FLU PROGRAM, HE INDICATED, WAS BY
SMALL BUT VOCIFEROUS GROUP AND PREDATED PARTI QUEBECOIS
VICTORY WHICH "MADE US ALL FACE REALITY."

3. PROFESSING SURPRISE OVER NOT MEETING HOST OF
COMPLAINTS ABOUT AGEING ARGUS AIRCRAFT, DANSON
NOTED WHAT HE CALLED CFB GREENWOOD'S "SPECIAL
AFFECTION FOR THE ARGUS" AND SAID HE FOUND
A "GENUINE LOVE AFFAIR BETWEEN THE TROOPS AND THE
ARGUS." HE ALSO REAFFIRMED CANADIAN COMMITMENT TO
NORAD AND NOTED THAT MAINTAINING A STRONG DETERRENT
WOULD BE COSTLY.

4. OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO PEI ESPECIALLY WAS
DANSON'S STATEMENT AT PRESS CONFERENCE THAT THERE
ARE NO PLANS TO CLOSE CFB SUMMERSIDE. HE REFERRED
TO MILITARY BASES IN SUCH PLACES AS THE MARITIMES
WHERE THEY PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE LOCAL
ECONOMY AND MADE WRY COMMENT THAT, WHILE CLOSURES
OBVIOUSLY COULD NOT BE TREATED LIGHTLY, IT WOULD BE
NICE IF HALF THE EXPENSE OF MAINTAINING THEM COULD
COME FROM CANADA MANPOWER OR DREE.

5. POUCHING CLIPPINGS RE VISIT TO EMBASSY OTTAWA AND
EUR/CAN.
MOORE

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